

*Prin.* How now my Lady the Hostesse, what say'st thou to me?

*Hostesse.* Marry, my Lord, there is a Noble man of the Court at doore would speake with you: hee sayes, hee comes from your Father.

*Prin.* Giue him as much as will make him a Royall man, and send him backe againe to my Mother.

*Falst.* What manner of man is hee?

*Hostesse.* An old man.

*Falst.* What doth Grauitie out of his Bed at Midnight? Shall I giue him his answere?

*Prin.* Prethee doe Iacke.

*Falst.* Faith, and Ile send him packing. *Exit.*

*Prince.* Now Sirs: you fought faire; so did you *Peto*, so did you *Bardol*: you are Lyons too, you ranne away vpon instinct: you will not touch the true Prince; no, hee.

*Bard.* Faith, I ranne when I saw others runne.

*Prin.* Tell mee now in earnest, how came *Falstafes* sword so hackt?

*Peto.* Why, hee hackt it with his Dagger, and said, hee would sweare truth out of England, but hee would make you beleeue it was done in fight, and perswaded vs to doe the like.

*Bard.* Yea, and to tickle our Noses with Spear-grasse, to make them bleed, and then to beslobber our garments with it, and sweare it was the blood of true men. I did that I did not this seuen yeeres before, I blusht to heare his monstrous deuices.

*Prin.* O Villaine, thou stolest a Cup of Sacke eigh- teene yeeres agoe, and wert taken with the manner, and euer since thou hast blusht extempore: thou hadst fire and sword on thy side, and yet thou ranst away; what instinct hadst thou for it?

*Bard.* My Lord, doe you see these Meteors? doe you behold these Exhalations?

*Prin.* I doe.

*Bard.* What thinke you they portend?

*Prin.* Hot Liuers, and cold Purfes.

*Bard.* Choler, my Lord, if rightly taken.

*Prin.* No, if rightly taken, Halter.

*Enter Falstaf.*

Heere comes leane *Iacke*, heere comes bare-bone. How now my sweet Creature of Bombast, how long is't agoe, *Iacke*, since thou saw'st thine owne Knee?

*Falst.* My owne Knee? When I was about thy yeeres (*Hal*) I was not an Eagles Talent in the Waste, I could haue crept into any Aldermans Thumbe-Ring: a plague of fighting and griefe, it blowes a man vp like a Bladder. There's villanous Newes abroad: heere was Sir *Iohn Braby* from your Father; you must goe to the Court in the Morning. The same mad fellow of the North, *Percy*; and hee of Wales, that gaue *Amamon* the Bastinado, and made *Lucifer* Cuckold; and swore the Deuill his true Liege-man vpon the Crosse of a Welch-hooke; what a plague call you him?

*Poin.* O, *Glendower*.

*Falst.* *Owen, Owen*; the same, and his Sonne in Law *Mortimer*, and old *Northumberland*, and the sprightly Scot of Scots, *Douglas*, that runnes a Horse-backe vp a Hill perpendicular.

*Prin.* Hee that rides at high speede, and with a Pistoll kills a Sparrow flying.

*Falst.* You haue hit it.

*Prin.* So did he neuer the Sparrow.

*Falst.* Well, that Rascall hath good mettrall in him, hee will not runne.

*Prin.* Why, what a Rascall art thou then, to prayse him so for running?

*Falst.* A Horse-backe (ye Cuckoe) but a foot hee will not budge a foot.

*Prin.* Yes *Iacke*, vpon instinct.

*Falst.* I grant ye, vpon instinct: Well, hee is there too, and one *Mordake*, and a thousand blew-Cappes more. *Worcester* is stolne away by Night: thy Fathers Beard is turn'd white with the Newes; you may buy Land now as cheape as stinking Mackrell.

*Prin.* Then 'tis like, if there come a hot Sunne, and this ciuill buffeting hold, wee shall buy Maiden-heads as they buy Hob-nayles, by the Hundreds.

*Falst.* By the Masse Lad, thou say'st true, it is like wee shall haue good trading that way. But tell me *Hal*, art not thou horrible afraid? thou being Heire apparant, could the World picke thee out three such Enemies as gaine, as that Fiend *Douglas*, that Spirit *Percy*, and that Deuill *Glendower*? Art not thou horrible afraid? Doth not thy blood thrill at it?

*Prin.* Not a whit: I lacke some of thy instinct.

*Falst.* Well, thou wilt be horrible chidde to morrow, when thou comest to thy Father: if thou doe loue me, praetise an answere.

*Prin.* Doe thou stand for my Father, and examine mee vpon the particulars of my Life.

*Falst.* Shall I? content: This Chayre shall bee my State, this Dagger my Scepter, and this Cushion my Crowne.

*Prin.* Thy State is taken for a Ioynd-Stoole, thy Golden Scepter for a Leaden Dagger, and thy precious rich Crowne, for a pittifull bald Crowne.

*Falst.* Well, and the fire of Grace be not quite out of thee, now shalt thou be moued. Giue me a Cup of Sacke to make mine eyes looke redde, that it may be thought I haue wept, for I must speake in passion, and I will doe it in King *Canbyes* vaine.

*Prin.* Well, heere is my Legge.

*Falst.* And heere is my speech: stand aside Nobilitie, *Hostesse*. This is excellent sport, yfaith.

*Falst.* Weepe not, sweet Queene, for trickling teares are vaine.

*Hostesse.* O the Father, how hee holdes his countenance?

*Falst.* For Gods sake Lords, conuey my trustfull Queen, For teares doe stop the floud-gates of her eyes.

*Hostesse.* O rare, he doth it as like one of these harlotry Players, as euer I see.

*Falst.* Peace good Pint-pot, peace good Tickle-braine. *Harry*, I doe not onely maruell where thou spendest thy time; but also, how thou art accompanied: For though the Camomile, the more it is troden, the faster it growes; yet Youth, the more it is wasted, the sooner it weares. Thou art my Sonne: I haue partly thy Mothers Word, partly my Opinion; but chiefly, a villanous trick of thine Eye, and a foolish hanging of thy nether Lippe, that doth warrant me. If then thou be Sonne to mee, heere lyeth the point: why, being Sonne to me, art thou so poynted at? Shall the blessed Sonne of Heauen proue a Micher, and cate Black-berries? a question not to bee askt. Shall the Sonne of England proue a Theefe, and take Purfes? a question to be askt. There is a thing, *Harry*, which thou hast often heard of, and it is knowne to many

many in our Land, by the Name of Pitch: this Pitch (as ancient Writers doe report) doth deale; so doth the com- panie thou keepest: for *Harry*, now I doe not speake to thee in Drinke, but in Teares; not in Pleasure, but in Pas- sion; not in Words onely, but in Woos also: and yet there is a vertuous man, whom I haue often noted in thy companie, but I know not his Name.

*Prin.* What manner of man, and it like your Ma- iestie?

*Falst.* A goodly portly man yfaith, and a corpulent, of a chearefull Look, a pleasing Eye, and a most noble Carriage, and as I thinke, his age some fiftie, or (byrady) inclining to threescore; and now I remember mee, his Name is *Falstaf*: if that man should be lewdly giuen, hee deceiues mees for *Harry*, I see Vertue in his Lookes. If then the Tree may be knowne by the Fruit, as the Fruit by the Tree, then peremptorily I speake it, there is Vertue in that *Falstaf*: him keepe with, the rest banish. And tell mee now, thou naughty Varie, tell mee, where hast thou bene this moneth?

*Prin.* Do'st thou speake like a King? doe thou stand for mee, and Ile play my Father.

*Falst.* Depose me: if thou do'st it halfe so grauely, so maiestically, both in word and matter, hang me vp by the heeles for a Rabber-sucker, or a Poulters Hare.

*Prin.* Well, heere I am set.

*Falst.* And heere I stand: iudge my Masters.

*Prin.* Now *Harry*, whence come you?

*Falst.* My Noble Lord, from East-cheape.

*Prin.* The complaints I heare of thee, are grievous.

*Falst.* Yfaith, my Lord, they are false: Nay, Ile tickle ye for a young Prince.

*Prin.* Swarest thou, vngracious Boy? henceforth ne're looke on me: thou art violently carryed away from Grace: there is a Deuill haunts thee, in the Likeness of a fat old Man; a Tunne of Man is thy Companion: Why do'st thou conuerse with that Trunke of Humors, that Boulting-Hutch of Beastlinesse, that swolne Parcell of Dropfies, that huge Bombard of Sacke, that stuff Cloake- bagge of Guts, that roasted Manning Tree Oxe with the Pudding in his Belly, that reuerend Vice, that grey Ini- quitie, that Father Ruffian, that Vanitie in yeeres? where- in is he good, but to taste Sacke, and drinke it? wherein neat and cleanly, but to carue a Capon, and eat it? where- in cunning, but in Craft? wherein Craftie, but in Villie- nie? wherein Villanous, but in all things? wherein wor- thy, but in nothing?

*Falst.* I would your Grace would take me with you: whom meanes your Grace?

*Prin.* That villanous abominable mis-leader of Youth, *Falstaf*, that old white-bearded Sathan.

*Falst.* My Lord, the man I know.

*Prin.* I know thou do'st.

*Falst.* But to say, I know more harme in him then in my selfe, were to say more then I know. That hee is olde (the more the pittie) his white hayres doe witnesse it: but that hee is (sawing your reuerence) a Whore-ma- ster, that I vterly deny. If Sacke and Sugar bee a fault, Heauen helpe the Wicked: if to be olde and merry, be a sinne, then many an olde Hoste that I know, is damn'd: if to be fat, be to be hated, then *Pharaohs* leane Kine are to be loued. No, my good Lord, banish *Peto*, banish *Bardolph*, banish *Poinces*: but for sweete *Iacke Falstaf*, kinde *Iacke Falstaf*, true *Iacke Falstaf*, valiant *Iacke Fal- staf*, and therefore more valiant, being as hee is olde *Iack Falstaf*, banish not him thy *Harryes* companie, banish

not him thy *Harryes* companie; banish plump *Iacke*, and banish all the World.

*Prince.* I doe, I will.

*Enter Bardolph running.*

*Bard.* O, my Lord, my Lord, the Sherife, with a most most monstrous Watch, is at the doore.

*Falst.* Out you Rogue, play out the Play: I haue much to say in the behalfe of that *Falstaf*.

*Enter the Hostesse.*

*Hostesse.* O, my Lord, my Lord.

*Falst.* Heigh, heigh, the Deuill rides vpon a Fiddle- sticke: what's the matter?

*Hostesse.* The Sherife and all the Watch are at the doore: they are come to search the House, shall I let them in?

*Falst.* Do'st thou heare *Hal*, neuer call a true peece of Gold a Counterfeit: thou art essentially made, without seeming so.

*Prince.* And thou a naturall Coward, without in- stinct.

*Falst.* I deny your *Maier*: if you will deny the Sherife, so: if not, let him enter. If I become not a Cart as well as another man, a plague on my bringing vp: I hope I shall as soone be strangled with a Halter, as ano- ther.

*Prince.* Goe hide thee behinde the Arras, the rest walke vp aboue. Now my Masters, for a true Face and good Conscience.

*Falst.* Both which I haue had: but their date is out, and therefore Ile hide me. *Exit.*

*Prince.* Call in the Sherife.

*Enter Sherife and the Carrier.*

*Prince.* Now Master Sherife, what is your will with mee?

*She.* First pardon me, my Lord. A Hue and Cry hath followed certaine men vnto this house.

*Prince.* What men?

*She.* One of them is well knowne, my gracious Lord, a grosse fat man.

*Car.* As fat as Butter.

*Prince.* The man, I doe assure you, is not heere, For I my selfe at this time haue imploy'd him: And Sherife, I will engage my word to thee, That I will by to morrow Dinner time, Send him to answere thee, or any man, For any thing he shall be charg'd withall: And so let me entreat you, leaue the house.

*She.* I will, my Lord: there are two Gentlemen Haue in this Robberie lost three hundred Markes.

*Prince.* It may be so: if he haue robb'd these men, He shall be answerable: and so farewell.

*She.* Good Night, my Noble Lord.

*Prince.* I thinke it is good Morrow, is it not?

*She.* Indeede, my Lord, I thinke it be two a Clocke. *Exit.*

*Prince.* This oily Rascall is knowne as well as Poules: goe call him forth.

*Peto.* *Falstaf*? fast asleepe behinde the Arras, and snorting like a Horse.

*Prince.* Harke, how hard he fetches breath: search his Pockets. *He*